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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, OVIP, JA
SUBJECT: SOHYO SECGEN TOMIZUKA'S VIEWS ON FORTHCOMING VISIT

REF: TOKYO 8553

1. SOHYO SECGEN TOMIZUKA, IN DISCUSSING WITH LABATT MAY 16 HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO U.S., SAID THAT GENERAL SECRETARIES OF FOUR JAPANESE LABOR CONFEDERATIONS PREPARING JOINT POSITION ON ISSUES OF COMMON CONCERN FOR MEETING WITH AFL-CIO PRESIDENT MEANY JUNE 1. TOMIZUKA SAID ALL HAD AGREED SO FAR TO URGE AFL-CIO TO SUPPORT RETURN OF U.S. TO ILO, TO ASK FOR AFL-CIO'S COOPERATION IN THEIR EFFORTS TO WIN EXPANDED FRINGE BENEFITS (SUCH AS LONGER VACATION AND FIVE-DAY WORK WEEK) FOR JAPANESE WORKERS, TO SEEK TO IDENTIFY AFL-CIO'S MAIN CONCERNS WITH RESPECT TO BILATERAL TRADE ISSUES AND TO COMPARE POSITIONS OF U.S. AND JAPANESE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS ON ACTIVITIES OF MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS. CONSEQUENTLY, TOMIZUKA DOES NOT PLAN TO RAISE SOHYO RELATIONSHIP WITH AFL-CIO ON THIS OCCASION, EXCEPT TO HAND TO MEANY LETTER FROM MAKIEDA
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FORMALLY ACCEPTING AFL-CIO PROPOSAL FOR JOINT DISCUSSIONS IN FALL. TOMIZUKA FULLY PREPARED, HOWEVER, TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS RAISED BY AFL-CIO. TOMIZUKA ADDED THAT DOMEI, CHURITSU RORENAND SHIN SANBETSU RIPS SHARE HIS VIEW THAT OCCASION SHOULD NOT BE USED TO RAISE POINTS OF DIFFERENCE AMONG THEM.

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2. TOMIZUKA MADE STRONG PITCH FOR CALL BY FOUR GENERAL SECRETARIES ON VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE SAYING THAT THEY WISH TO EXPLAIN TO HIM VIEWS OF JAPANESE ORGANIZED LABOR ON BILATERAL TRADE ISSUES AND TO OBTAIN FROM HIM LATEST USG THINKING ON OVERALL STATE OF U.S.-JAPAN RELATIONSHIP. HE EMPHASIZED THAT ALTHOUGH OSTENSIBLE PURPOSE OF U.S. TRIP IS PARTICIPATION AS PART OF JAPANESE NGO DELEGATION TO U.N. SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT, EXCEPT FOR CALL ON ACDA THEY HAD NO INTEREST IN RAISING DISARMAMENT QUESTIONS WITH USG OFFICIALS BUT INSTEAD WERE PREOCCUPIED WITH NEED FOR JAPANESE LABOR ORGANIZATIONS TO CONTRIBUTE TO SOLUTION OF TRADE DISPUTE. IN SAME VEIN, TOMIZUKA URGED EMB TO FACILITATE APPOINTMENT FOR ONE OF PRINCIPAL USG TRADE NEGOTIATORS SUCH AS DEPUTY STR ALAN WOLFF (SEPTEL.)

3. COMMENT: TOMIZUKA'S PRESENTATION INDICATES EXTENT TO WHICH SOHYO LEADERSHIP WISHES TO IDENTIFY ITSELF WITH THE TRADE ISSUE, TO DEMONSTRATE THAT IT AS WELL AS DOMEI HAS AN AMERICAN CONNECTION AND TO PLAY DOWN ITS PAST PREOCCU-PATION WITH FAR LEFT CAUSES AND ALMOST EXCLUSIVE FRATERNAL-IZATION WITH SOVIETS AND CHINESE. WHETHER THIS IS SINCERE CONVERSION OR MERE PUBLICITY TACTIC TO MODIFY JAPANESE PUBLIC'S INCREASINGLY NEGATIVE IMAGE OF SOHYO REMAINS TO BE SEEN AND WILL MOST LIKELY BE CLARIFIED NEXT FALL IN MEETINGS WITH AFL-CIO. IN INTERIM, TOMIZUKA, WHO WILL BE TAKING HIS FIRST SIGNIFICANT LOOK AT U.S. NEXT MONTH
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(HE PAID VERY BRIEF VISIT TO NEW YORK IN EARLY 1976), APPEARS UNUSUALLY RECEPTIVE TO CANDID COMMENTS FROM AMERICANS HE MEETS ABOUT SOHYO POLICIES AND WORLD OUTLOOK.

4. WE SUGGEST THAT SUBSTANCE OF ABOVE BE PASSED TO AFL-CIO INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR ERNIE LEE.
MANSFIELD

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